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NEWS

'True Meaning of Christmas' dinner serves largest crowd ever in Taylor



By **DAVE GORGON** |

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After serving free Christmas dinner to “well over 400 guests,” members of the Donski family say they plan to do it again next Dec. 25 for the 22nd year in a row.

The Donski family members, living throughout Downriver, decided more than two decades ago to pool their family gift exchange funds and provide a meal on Christmas Day at the William Ford Senior Activity Center in Taylor.

Together with an army of volunteers, they open up the “True Meaning of Christmas” dinner to everyone, especially those having a hard time

This year, diners were lining up about a half-hour before the doors were scheduled to open at noon and food was served a half-hour longer than the announced 3 p.m. end time.

“I know we say this every year, but I truly believe this was the biggest ever,” said Lisa Domski of Wyandotte. “After we said grace, the line stretched to the back of the senior center and overflowed into the reception area. At times, there was hardly room to move the pop carts and coffee carts around. It was amazing to see.”

The host family felt the love.

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“Our guests that came were so very thankful,” Domski said. “I walked around and talked to many people. I think the joy it brought to them and just the appreciation and kindness are what I noticed this year.”

Promotion of the event on social media, in newspapers and Taylor’s city newsletter not only increased the crowd, but also the interest in helping, Domski said. Volunteers helped set up and clean up the center, cooked and served food, served beverages and more.

“What an overwhelming amount of volunteers just because they had heard about it,” Domski said. “We had a number of newcomers come to volunteer. How amazing is that for people to give up their Christmas Day to give back to the community?”

Domski thanked Taylor Mayor Rick Sollars for making the meal possible by donating the use of the senior center, continuing the long tradition “to support our cause.” She also thanked the owners of Al’s Asphalt for being a “generous donator” for a number of years, along with members of the Whitmer family, the Bondy family, Robert Bates, Erica Fulkerson – who donated 10 dozen cookies – and many other contributors – including those who cook turkeys for the meal.

So same time next year?

“God willing,” Domski said. “We’re always going to plan on doing it.”

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